

REVISED EDITION

OF

**McCALL'S RULES**

OF THE

**COCK PIT**



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# McCALL'S RULES

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## MATCHING COCKS FOR MAINS

In order to assist parties in their private cock houses, cocks should be placed in coops in rotation from bottom to top weight, and the weight of each cock, even to a fractional part of an ounce should be plainly marked on each coop just prior to the commencement of the main. Coops should be numbered in rotation in which each cock of each party is placed, and each cock should be known by the number which is marked on the coop. Correct tested scales weighing within a quarter of an ounce, and all recording weights alike should be used by the judge, and both parties. The judge shall always weigh each and every cock at actual weight, even to a fractional part of an ounce. Actual weight is where the beam on the scales balance without touching upper or lower rest. All cocks of equal weight are matched, then those with difference in weight, commencing with the smallest difference first, and afterwards those within two ounces. After all the matches in main are made, each party or a friend of each party, shall draw off from this match-list, a copy match-list written in ink, or with indelible pencil, giving the exact weight and number of each

and every pair of cocks that are matched and are to be fought in the main. Then each party shall sign in ink, or with indelible pencil, his name on his own match-list, which shall be exchanged then and there between the parties, viz: A, will hand to B, his prepared match-list, and B will hand to A his prepared match-list. The judge shall be provided with an exact copy of each of these two match-lists, and all interested shall examine and see and agree on the correctness of these three match-lists, and by which the cocks shall be ordered to the pit for exhibition and for battle.

When the judge, and both parties, and friends, are ready to match cocks in main, the scales should be located at a convenient place agreed upon by both sides. The judge shall then order both parties fighting the main, to produce their cocks, number, one (1), and which shall be shown together, and weighed immediately one after the other, and the weights and descriptions of both these cocks will be taken at this time. After finishing with first pair of cocks, the judge will continue to proceed in weighing, and in taking descriptions of all cocks to be shown in main in like manner in numbered rotation to the end. This gives no possible advantage to either side, as all cocks are shown, weighed, and descriptions taken together in pairs from number one (1) cock, to number twenty-

one (21) cock, or whatever number of fowl are to be shown in main. Should the cock-houses be too far apart for the convenience of the parties fighting the main to show and weigh cocks together in pairs, then by the toss of a coin, it shall be agreed which side shall show, weigh, and have descriptions of his cocks taken first. The cocker who shows first, has the privilege to select a representative to go to the opponent's cock house, with the opponents's representative, and remain there with all the cocks that the opponent will have to show in main pointed out to him, and the cocks to remain in his sight until judge and parties have finished with first side's cocks, and have appeared and are in cock house of second opponent to finish their work of weighing, describing and matching cocks. It shall be a matter of agreement after cocks are weighed and matched, whether they shall be fought by description lists alone, or whether they shall both answer description lists, and be re-weighed at pit-side, just prior to being heeled. The heeling of cocks shall always be done at the pit-side, and Rule 12 invoked before cocks are heeled. A toss of coin will also decide whether the main shall commence with bottom or top weight. The fighting shall always start from either bottom or top weights of each match-lists, and the cocks shall be fought in rotation as regards up-



ward or downward weights, to the end of main. The judge shall order the cocks to the pit, and call out, viz: First battle, A. No. 1; weight, 4.10—B. No. 1; weight, 4.10. Second battle: A. No. 2; weight, 4.12 1-4—B. No. 2; weight, 4.13 1-4. Third battle: A. No. 4; weight, 4.14 1-2—B. No. 5; weight, 5.00 1-4. Fourth battle: A. No. 6; weight, 5.00 3-4—B. No. 7; weight, 5.01. And so on to the end.

Rule 1.—A single judge can be decided upon, or each party can appoint a judge and together agree upon a referee.

Rule 2.—The judge shall stop the progress of any fight that shows clearly is being fraudulently conducted, and declare all bets off.

Rule 3.—Where there is not an established pit, then the parties shall agree upon size of pit-ring to be used in fighting the main.

Rule 4.—The proper position of the judge directing the fighting, is in the pit-ring along with the pitters.

Rule 5.—Cocks at all times shall be fought in full feather. No head, hackle, or body feathers shall be cut. Only long flowing tail feathers, and wing feathers may be cut. Cocks can be fought with ragged hackles and feathers, not purposely made so.

Rule 6.—Cutting off a comb or gills, or a

broken wing, or feathers off a broken wing of a cock during battle is forbidden.

Rule 7.—When pitters enter the pit with their cocks, and at all pittings, the judge shall command, "Get Ready,"—then wait as near five seconds as possible, and then command, "Pit." Pitters must step back quickly after pitting the cocks, and must stand six feet from their cocks during the fighting at all times. A pitter shall not advance or walk around his cocks until a blow has passed. If the cocks in battle, crowd and advance on a pitter's required distance of six feet from the cocks, then the pitter shall promptly step back to required distance of six feet. Cocks must be pitted on their score marks, and at all times directly opposite each other.

Rule 8.—It shall be definitely stated that top and bottom weight cocks in mains shall not weigh a fractional part of an ounce above the weights stipulated in the articles of agreement.

Rule 9.—In case an even number of cocks are matched for a main, the pair next above (in weight) the bottom weight, shall be discarded, and not fought unless one battle in the main is a draw, then this discarded pair shall be next pair to fight.

Rule 10.—The time between the termination of one battle, and the beginning of another battle in mains, should be about

fifteen (15) minutes. Cockers shall not purposely delay the fighting.

Rule 11.—If pitter should forfeit the fight by acting contrary to the rules, after the fight has commenced, then by-bets are also forfeited.

Rule 12.—Before cocks are heeled for battle, the judge shall order both pitters to step into the pit and hold their cocks in view of the spectators for a few moments; thereby giving every one a chance to see the cocks, and time to place their bets on their choice while cocks are being heeled.

Rule 13.—The judge should be extremely careful in rendering a decision on a foul. Unintentional violation of the rules may be overlooked if same has not affected the final result.

Rule 14.—All heels that are round from the socket to the point are fair. A broken gaff cannot be replaced during a fight.

Rule 15.—Pitters will be allowed to sponge cocks' heads and legs, or moisten their throats with water or Saliva between pittings. Nothing but plain water shall be used, and both pitters shall use water from the same bucket, if any objection is made to separate bottles, cans, or buckets. A pitter can be assisted by friends on the outside of pit-ring between pittings, in getting water, and handing sponge to pitter, and general useful assistance, but pitters shall do their own nursing and fanning of



cocks. Outsiders shall not assist in fanning or enter pit unless called upon to assist in catching a cock.

Rule 16.—It is not permissible to use anything on the cocks' feathers before or after being brought into the pit. A pitter can clean gaffs, sling blood, take dirt or feathers out of a cock's mouth, or from around his head between pittings.

Rule 17.—In hack fighting, if an attempt is made to change a cock after a match is made, or an exchange is made, and not detected until the fight is in progress or over, the offending party forfeits the fight.

Rule 18.—Clucking to cocks, blowing, or any noise made for the purpose of waking a cock up by attracting his attention, shall not be allowed.

Rule 19.—Cocks weighing within two ounces of each other are matched. Cocks weighing over 6.06 are shakes and match at catch weights.

Blinkers and stags are allowed four ounces by a perfect cock.

Blinkers and stags match at equal weights give or take two ounces.

Rule 20.—In pitting cocks on score marks six feet apart, pitters are not required to pit with one hand under the cock. At such pittings, they can hold their cocks with both hands in natural way. It is only

when cocks are pitted beak to beak that one hand is used.

When pitting a cock, the pitter must not shove or hold his cock, but must take his hands off the cock promptly as soon as placed on the score mark when ordered by the judge to Pit.

Rule 21.—A pitter shall compel his opponent to bill the cocks a time or so before pitting; and cocks must be pitted fairly on their feet at all times, with no attempt to stick a gaff in ground, or purposely lay a cock sideways on ground. Cocks will be pitted six feet apart, except during the instances specified in Time and Count. When cocks are being pitted beak to beak, they must be pitted with one hand, and it under the cock, and the other hand entirely away from the cock. Pitters, in this instance, shall not pit cocks by holding them with one hand by butt of tail:

Rule 22.—When cocks are ordered pitted beak to beak, the judge shall require them pitted beak to beak, and not side ways, or breast to breast, or out of distance to peck. Cocks pitted contrary to this rule should be promptly ordered repitted, and the pitters cautioned not to repeat the act.

Rule 23.—In hack fighting, if a cock refuses to fight at the commencement of the fight, and before having struck a blow, the fight and all bets are off. Should a cock, in main, refuse to fight, he loses the battle.

Pecking, pecking at, striking, striking at, and chasing his opponent, counts as fighting. A cock holding on to his opponent is fighting.

Rule 24.—The judge, when required, may suffer a pitter to call in some of his friends to assist in catching the cock, who are to retire immediately when the cock is caught, and in no other instance is the judge to suffer the pit to be broken.

Rule 25.—The Rest after handling between pittings is twenty (20) seconds, and the pitters must hold the cocks during the Rest, so that the judge can see them at all times, and with their heads exposed.

Rule 26.—When a cock is hung in himself,—the other cock, the ground or side of pit, the pitters shall not attempt to handle without calling on the judge who is directing the fighting, by crying out, "Can I handle?" But the judge should always be carefully watching, and when cocks are entitled to be handled, he should promptly call out in a clear, loud voice, "**handle,**" even before pitters are required to ask permission. The judge has a right to call upon pitters to "**handle,**" when cocks are together, lying still with gaffs hidden under feathers, and he thinks they are hung, even if they are not fastened with their gaffs, and an honest mistake is made in giving the order. The pitter always pulls the gaffs out of his own cock when



hung by catching the other cock below the knee; should he have occasion to put his hand on the other cock, he must do so with open hand.

Rule 27.—A cock that can see, or if blind, that carelessly walks away from the opponent cock in battle, shall not be declared a “runaway cock.” A cock must actually run, or if so badly wounded that he cannot run, he must show distinct signs of running to be declared a “runaway cock.” A blind cock is pitted at all times, just the same as a cock that can see.

Rule 28.—Should a cock that has secured the Count, begin to carelessly walk about and away from his opponent cock, and continues to do so during the battle, and the opponent cock is too weak to break the Count, then the judge will continue to Count for the cock that is walking (not running away), to the end of Count. As soon as Count is finished, the judge shall order the gaffs cut off the cock that walked away, and the judge shall order an outside cock brought into the pit, and shall order him pitted to beak, against this cock that walked away. If this cock that has walked away, then shows fight in this one pitting the judge shall declare him the winner of the battle. If he does not show fight, then the opponent cock wins the battle. If he fails to show fight in this test, he shall be deemed as a runaway, and the opponent

cock wins this battle, if he is a living cock at the time of this test, and not a runaway himself.

Rule 29.—In pulling the gaffs, cocks must be held steady by the pitters, and the gaffs pulled gently out of the cocks, as they lay on, or near the ground.

Rule 30.—These rules do not permit giving a cock a wing or turning him over when on his side or back.

Rule 31.—Cocks when once pitted beak to beak, in either Time or Count, will be continued pitted beak to beak until end of fight.

Rule 32.—If both cocks are dying when Count or Time is given, the judge shall not stop to see which cock will die first; but, judge shall continue to have the cocks pitted to the end of either Count or Time, just as if nothing unusual was transpiring. During these pittings, the judge shall stand close to the cocks, with cocks in full view of him, and the very instant one cock dies, the judge shall declare the opponent cock the winner. If both cocks are living at the end of Time, the battle shall be declared a draw.

The judge shall have the right to take a cock that he thinks is a dead cock in his own hands to convince himself of the fact.

Rule 33.—TIME:—When cocks stop fighting, and neither has the Count, the judge should give (or one of the pitters

can demand it), Time of twenty (20) seconds, three times, with the Rest of twenty (20) seconds between each pitting. In taking "Time," the judge should promptly state, "Time is going on."

Rule 34.—In giving Time, the first Time will be given with the cocks remaining in the positions where they have ceased fighting. The second Time, cocks will be pitted beak to beak. Third Time, cocks will again be pitted beak to beak, and if neither cock fights during this period of three Times, the fight shall be declared a draw. If one of the cocks fight before completion of Time, then Time is broken (discontinued), and Count is given. If Time is broken by cocks fighting, when given again, the cocks must be pitted through the three Times as at the commencement of each first Time. At commencement of battle, no Time can be given when cocks have not struck a blow.

Rule 35.—If both cocks cease fighting, or are in a dying condition, and neither cock has been given the Count or can take it, Time is given and continued to the end, when the fight will be declared a draw. If one of the cocks dies before the completion of Time, the fight shall be given to the living cock as soon as his opponent dies. If both cocks are running at the end of last Time, the fight shall be declared a draw.

Rule 36.—COUNT:—The judge shall do



the counting at all times. The counting must be done in a distinct deliberate manner with the object of having each Ten cover ten seconds, and the Twenty Count, twenty seconds, as near as possible.

Rule 37.—The judge in Counting, shall immediately point with his arm toward the pitter that has the Count, and at the end of first ten, will say, one for A; two for A; three for A; then pit beak to beak for the Count of twenty.

Rule 38.—In these rules, a pitter should always be on the alert in protecting his interest by promptly calling for the Count when his cock fights last, and the opponent cock has ceased fighting. If a pitter fails to call for the Count in five (5) seconds after his cock has fought last, then his cock loses the right to the Count in this instance, and the judge shall then cry out, "Time is going on," if cocks are not fighting. It shall always be entirely with the judge as to whether a pitter fails to call for the Count in the five seconds given him under these rules.

Rule 39.—The pitter of the cock that fights last, can call for the count of three Tens, and a Twenty, with the Rest of (20) twenty seconds between each Ten, and the Twenty.

When pitted for the Twenty Count, the cocks will be pitted beak to beak.

The fight will be awarded against the

cock that is being counted out, and does not fight during the successive counts of three Tens, and the Twenty.

Rule 40.—If during the progress of Count, the cock that is being counted out fights before the Twenty Count is reached, the Count is broken, (discontinued), and when pitted again they are pitted on their scores six feet apart,—if the Count is not broken until the Twenty Count is reached, they are pitted beak to beak at every pitting until the fight is ended.

Cocks when once pitted beak to beak, in either Time or Count, will be continued pitted beak to beak until end of fight.

Rule 41.—A pitter whose cock is fighting, can not be forced to call for the Count, nor can the opposing pitter call for it in this instance, whose cock is not fighting. A fighting cock has a right to fight on until he stops, or until his pitter calls for the Count.

Rule 42.—If a pitter whose cock is running, does not give up the battle, then it requires the usual three Tens and the Twenty to count the running cock out.

Rule 43.—In mains and tournaments, a cocker has the right to fight the same cock over again.

Rule 44.—Should a cock that is given the Count get hung, the cocks must be handled promptly and pitted at once on the same scores as at the commencement of

the pitting, and the Count continued from where left off when handled.

Rule 45.—If a cock, that the Count has been given to, runs away during the Count, he loses it as soon as he runs, and the Count is at once given to the opponent cock, if not running himself.

The judge shall commence to count for the opponent cock immediately, even though such cock be so badly wounded he cannot take it, and the judge will continue to Count until the Count is either broken, or the running cock is counted out. If the cock that is given the Count, dies before the completion of same, and the opponent cock is still running away, then the fight shall be declared a draw.

Rule 46.—If a pitter does not know the rules, his rights by the judge should be fully protected in a battle at all times, by instructing the pitter as regards any point in his favor that may arise. These rules are intended to give fair play to all cockers alike.

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To the Fraternity: After forty years active experience in cock-fighting, and two former efforts in writing rules, I am now, after the most careful and painstaking consideration, giving to the cockers my final revised rules. Without any degree of egotism, I believe McCall's rules to be the most perfect ever written. After many correc-



tions, and with the utmost care I have perfected them. They cover plainly every point known to me in cock-fighting. They may at first glance, look to be too long. I claim cocks can be fought under them quicker than under any other rules in use. It is only necessary to learn to use **Count and Time**, in order to fight cocks successfully by these rules. Other laws laid down, come up only occasionally, and when these points arise, there is always a law to govern the judge's action and decision.

First—They do not permit giving a cock a wing or turning him over when on his back. If a feeder has his cocks in good condition, so strong that they can knock their opponents down, then why should they not be entitled to this advantage without a pitter stepping in and assisting? If such is allowed, then your cock is not only fighting the cock, but the cock with assistance of the pitter combined.

Second—They prevent the cutting of feathers. If you cut a cock's feathers, and I do the same, has any one gained any advantage over the other? All that there is to it, we have both equally succeeded in mutilating our birds during the cold months by following a foolish and an old antiquated custom.

Third—Under these rules, all counting is done by the judge. This is a very important rule. Rules that give pitters the right

to do the counting, in my opinion, invite wrangles, and are extremely faulty. They prevent both pitters from trying to take the Count at the same time. They also prevent the ridiculous practice of pitters counting cocks out with lightning-like rapidity of speech, that even the glib-tongued auctioneer would seem slow in comparison. Such unfair tactics are too ridiculous almost for sane consideration.

Fourth—They place a blind cock in his proper sphere. They eliminate all discussion as to whether he is a blind cock or not. If a cock goes into battle with his sight, and your cock by scientific fighting has succeeded in knocking his eyes out, then why should he not be entitled to this advantage? To put them breast to breast, because one is blind, is only another instance of your cock having to fight his opponent, with the assistance of the pitter combined.

Fifth—They give the judge the right to say when cocks should be handled, and not the pitters. They therefore keep pitters from handling when cocks are not hung.

Sixth—They prevent any possible chance of a runaway cock winning over a badly wounded game cock, or as for that matter, winning at all.

Seventh—These rules lay down the law so clearly as regards how to deal with a dead, dying or runaway cock, that it is im-

possible for any intelligent judge to err. They give cocks a chance to win on their merits, and leave but little encouragement to the pitter looking to win on fouls, technicalities and "rough-house" tactics.

Eighth—They do not allow a fresh cock to be brought into the pit to decide a battle between two cocks, that have equally proved courageous, and have fought to the end, until both cocks will fight no longer. Why should not this battle in justice to both these cocks end in a draw, at the end of third Time, when both have failed to fight? A fresh cock may peck with such viciousness, as to still render one wounded cock less liable to peck, in fact, about kill him, while on the other hand, he may peck the opponent cock on the hackle feathers, that won't hurt him, and yet causes him to fight. A rule that requires a fresh cock to be brought into the pit to decide this fight in this instance, is preposterous. An outside cock should only be brought into the pit to test the gameness of a cock carelessly walking about and around the pit, when he has previously secured the Count over a badly wounded cock that can not break it.

Ninth—The public's attention is especially invited to Rule 12. Cockers could not successfully fight cocks without outsiders being present. Cockers have not sufficient time to place their bets after cocks are



heeled and ready for battle. This rule is a most important one, and a courtesy and a proper respect due all present in assisting in the elevation and betterment of the sport.

Tenth—They match cocks in mains in a correct and entirely new manner. If cocks are weighed at pit side, and then heeled, there can be no mistake made. Cocks that are fighting for big stakes should be weighed, like weighing gold. This old way of not counting a fractional part of an ounce of weight, and allowing one ounce for gaffs, has defeated many cockers in mains.

If cockers desire to squabble over weight, and are taking chances of getting three ounces advantage instead of two, I would advise them then, never to attempt to use these rules.

Cheap scales that do not weigh cocks precisely at actual weight, should never be used. I have often witnessed gentlemen fighting mains for thousands of dollars and using scales fit only to weigh worthless articles. In our tournaments, we use **Fairbanks** scales with utmost satisfaction. A cowpea will make them break. These are balance scales No. 8, 10 pound capacity, two iron plates furnished with side beam; graduated 1-4 ounce; no scoop. I only

give this information about scales to assist cockers.

These rules are entirely different from all other rules, as any one will readily see who carefully scrutinizes them, or compares them side by side with other rules.

SOL PATRICK McCALL.





